DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 204 983 EC 133 554

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TITLE	Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training: Field Based Inservice for Those Who Work with Handicapped Children. A First and Second Year Report.
INSTITUTION	Southwest Educational Development Lab., Austin, Tex.
SPONS AGENCY	Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (ED), Washington, D.C.
BUREAU NO	451BH00022
PUB DATE	30 Aug 80
GRANT	G007801431
NOTE	55p.: Appendixes F and G comprising more than two thirds of the document have been omitted due to local nature of material and inclusion of personal names.
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Competency Based Education: *Disabilities: Field Experience Programs: *Inservice Education: *Paraprofessional School Personnel: Preschool Education: Primary Education: *Staff Development
IDENTIFIERS	*Paraprofessional Training: Texas

ABSTRACT

The report covers the first two years of the 3 year Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training (APT) project. The project addresses the need for training paraprofessionals who currently are working with young handicapped children in rural and urban areas of Texas. APT provides onsite competency based training for paraprofessionals through a variety of alternatives matched to system specific needs. In addition, complementary training is provided the supervising teacher to facilitate effective utilization of APT trained paraprofessionals. The APT project has identified a core set of competencies for paraprofessionals and developed related training sessions and training needs survey. Using a process training model, core competencies are matched with system specific requirements and training needs in order to conduct field based training designed to meet individual site needs. During the first year of the project, 7,000 participant training hours were delivered for more than 1,000 attendees in rural and urban locations throughout the state. In the second year, approximately 8,000 participant training hours were delivered for 1,200 attendees. Appendixes include a listing of competencies for paraprofessionals, a listing of the topics for the 32 work sessions, an outline of the interface of competencies and work sessions, and a model certificate of recognition for program completion. Also available from the author are detailed reports of program implementation at each site. (Author/DB)

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ALTERNATIVES FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL TRAINING:

Field Based Inservice for Those Who Work With Handicapped Children

A First and Second Year Report of

Project No. 451 BH 00022
Grant No. G007801431

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August 30, 1980

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant from the Department of Education, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Department of Education position or policy.

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ALTERNATIVES FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL TRAINING:

Field-Based Inservice for Those Who Work with Handicapped Children

FIRST AND SECOND YEAR REPORT

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ABSTRACT

Increasing numbers of young handicapped children are entering public schools and child care programs (public and private) throughout the state of Texas. All indications suggest that this growth trend will continue over the next five years. As a result, all sectors are faced with the task of serving young handicapped children without adequate staff preparation or funds. In attempts to maintain cost-effectiveness and still provide additional personnel, paraprofessionals often are employed to provide direct or supplementary assistance to handicapped children. However, paraprofessional preparation, either pre-service or inservice, has been and continues to be inadequate.

Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training (APT) addresses the need for training paraprofessionals who currently are working with young handicapped children in rural and urban areas of Texas. APT provides on-site competency-based training for paraprofessionals through a variety of alternatives matched to system-specific needs. In addition, complementary training is provided the supervising teacher to facilitate effective utilization of APT trained paraprofessionals.

The APT project has identified a core set of competencies for paraprofessionals and developed related training sessions and training needs survey. Using a process-training model, core competencies are matched with system-specific requirements and training needs in order to conduct field-based training designed to meet individual site needs. During the first year of the project, 7,000 participant-training hours were delivered for more than 1,000 attendees in rural and urban locations throughout the state. In the second year, approximately 8,000 participant-training hours were delivered for 1,200 attendees.

ALTERNATIVES FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL TRAINING:
FIRST AND SECOND YEAR REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Full service to handicapped individuals, age three through twenty-one, has been mandated by state and federal legislation and through litigation establishing the right of free public education. In Texas, children classified as deaf, blind, or deaf-blind are eligible for services beginning at birth. A downward extension of services to include all handicapped children under the age of three is a concern of the Texas Education Agency. In addition to public school services, Head Start is mandated to include handicapped children within the regular preschool setting. Title XX child care centers also serve young handicapped children. Because of the growth trend of the population within the state, Texas finds itself with a sizeable and increasing number of handicapped individuals.

The most immediate problem facing the state of Texas in providing special education services is the lack of trained and qualified personnel. One method of addressing this need is the recruiting, training, or retraining of professionals. Another method, the one utilized in this project, is the training and use of the untapped resources of paraprofessionals who work in day care and public school settings with young handicapped children. Training paraprofessionals necessitates the design of instructional alternatives linked to a competency-based general program with alternatives uniquely suited to the individual sites, the capacities of the paraprofessionals, and the needs of the handicapped children served. It also necessitates the training of teachers and supervisors in the effective use of paraprofessionals.

With additional unserved handicapped children being identified at a time when school districts are economically hard pressed to provide trained personnel, it is necessary to seek the maximum utilization of existing resources. Further, early identification and assistance to these children will increase if those serving them, the teacher and aide, have the necessary teaching skills.

Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training focuses on the development and field implementation of alternative training programs for (a) paraprofessionals who assist certified teachers within the public school systems and (b) paraprofessionals who work with young handicapped children within public and private child care settings. For the purpose of the project, paraprofessionals have been defined as those non-degreed individuals who are not certified or do not have specialized training in the area of special education of young handicapped children. In addition, the training of teachers/supervisors in the utilization of paraprofessionals who have received such training has been undertaken.

Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training was funded by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped for a three year period beginning in June 1978. The following report details project activities and training conducted during the first and second years of the project.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project, Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training (APT), is to increase the knowledge, skills,and utilization of paraprofessionals working with young handicapped children in public schools and in private and public child care and preshool programs. The project provides for competency-based training which incorporates alternatives for local adaptation to meet the needs of individual centers and schools. Field-based training was projected at a minimum of 5,000 participant hours of training or an estimated 300 persons each year.

The objectives of the project are:

- -To identify competencies needed by paraprofessionals in working with young, handicapped children.
- -To identify the training needs of employed paraprofessionals in working with young handicapped children.
- -To develop field-based, training for paraprofessionals related to identified competencies and training needs.
- -To conduct field-based inservice training for paraprofessionals representing the following settings:
  - --Day Care settings which include young, handicapped children
  - --Head Start settings which include young, handicapped children
  - --Public and private special education classrooms which serve preschool handicapped children
  - --Public and private school regular classroom setting which include handicapped children of elementary age or younger

These objectives have been addressed throughout the first (June 1978 to May 1979) and second (June 1979 to May 1980) years of the project. The number of paraprofessionals and supervising teachers who have received training has exceeded the original projections. During the first year 7,000 participant hours of training were delivered. During the second year, more than 7,500 participant hours of training were delivered.

In the following sections, an overview of project activities through May 1980 is followed by sections describing the project design and training conducted.

BACKGROUND

The need for training paraprofessionals was delineated in the original proposal as submitted to the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped in the Fall of 1977 and updated in continuation proposals in the Fall of 1978 and 1979. These needs were described in relation to: (1) state needs, (2) regional/national needs, and (3) other needs. The following summary from the original proposal provides background to the project which was funded and initiated in June, 1978:

1. State Needs

The passage fo SB 230 by the 61st Legislature of the State of Texas authorized expanded services for handicapped students (including three-year-olds). Following a planning year (1969-70), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), set full-service implementation of its Plan A concept of special education as the goal for the decade. Under Plan A, school districts are responsible for providing special education services on a generic basis to all exceptional children ages three through twenty-one. In addition, Plan A requires that a minimum of 15 percent of services and resources be allocated to children in the three-, four-, and five-year-old range and permits use of funds for teacher aides and other support staff. This expansion of services to include preschool handicapped children has resulted in a shortage of adequately trained personnel to serve them. According to TEA's State Analysis of Personnel Positions for academic year 1977-78, 271 of the 445 professionals serving preschool handicapped children were not certified in that area and 20 positions across the state remained unfilled. While the State Analysis indicates that all paraprofessional positions are currently filled, it does not give an indication that these positions are filled by individuals who are trained or prepared to meet the needs of the children with whom they are working. However, the lack of training among professional personnel is in all likelihood an indication of an even greater lack of training among paraprofessional personnel.

Further evidence of the need for trained paraprofessionals is found in the TEA-projected need for personnel by 1980. The State Analysis for the 1977-78 school year showed that 5,986 paraprofessionals were employed in Texas. According to Fiscal Year 1979 Annual Program Plan for Part B of the Education of the Handicapped Act as amended by Public Law 94-142, this figure has increased to 6,105 paraprofessionals employed for the current year and TEA has projected that by 1980 an additional 4,000 paraprofessionals will be needed in the state. If 15 percent of these positions are assigned to early childhood special education classrooms, an additional 600 paraprofessionals will be needed to work with preschool handicapped children.

There is every reason to believe that this gap in training will not soon be filled. In TEA's Annual Program Plan for Part B of the Education of the Handicapped Act (Fiscal Year 1979), it was reported that 327,308 children (infant projects not included) received special education services during 1977-78. Of those children, 32701 were in the pre-elementary

category. Other children are not yet being served. Data from Phase II of the Project Child Find indicated that as of June 30, 1977, 1,356 identified handicapped children between ages three and five and 74 children between zero and two were not being served. The data represent an even greater need for services in this age group than had previously been projected.

Despite the evidence of the need for trained paraprofessionals, limited effort is being made to train them. Eight junior colleges in Texas offer associate degrees for teacher aides (as reported by the Texas Association of Public Junior College, 1976). Only four junior colleges offer a curriculum related to special education (Dallas County Junior college -- Special Education Aide program; Mountain View College -- Teacher Aide program; Del Mar College -- Mental Health Associate program; and Austin Community College -- A.A. in Education for the Deaf). It is obvious, however, that these programs cannot keep pace with the growing need, nor do they address the needs of those paraprofessionals who are presently employed. The programs are located in large urban areas and emphasize a traditional, college-oriented type of training, with practicum or volunteer work in a public school or clinical setting. This traditional approach frequently eliminates participation of the paraprofessional already working in a setting with young children. Therefore, alternative strategies for meeting the training needs of the currently employed paraprofessional must be developed and made available.

2. Regional/National Needs

While the need to provide training to paraprofessionals is evident throughout the state of Texas, it is not limited to Texas. A survey conducted by the Center for Urban Education estimated that in 1970, 200,000 paraprofessionals were involved in educational programs. An estimated 1.5 million were predicted to be employed in 1977 (cited by Schortinghuis and Frohman, 1974). Paraprofessionals are currently employed in every state, territory (except Virgin Islands), and the District of Columbia to serve all handicapped populations in the full range of activities (New Careers Training Laboratory, 1974). In a survey of 348 facilities which utilized paraprofessionals, 320 (92 percent) indicated that paraprofessionals were in need of training (New Careers Training Laboratory, 1974). Responses from directors repeatedly emphasized that paraprofessionals should serve as an integral part of the special education staff and indicated that with training, they could handle many classroom activities efficiently and effectively. The report also indicated that paraprofessionals were perceived as an essential element in providing individualized educational programs as well as adding additional insights into the problems of handicapped children. However, in regard to training, the New Careers Training Laboratory report says:

(1) With the exception of isolated programs, a majority of the paraprofessionals had no pre-service training and had uncoordinated in-service training which was often optional and, at best, infrequent.

(2) The differentiated staffing pattern of a professional and a paraprofessional in one classroom was frequently a source of conflict, in that the human aspect of two adults providing educational services which were not clearly defined or sanctioned, led to misinterpretation by either or both parties.

(3) Very little training has been given to paraprofessionals or teachers of "regular" classrooms to enable them to receive handicapped children who are beginning to be "mainstreamed."

(4) Finally, a majority of the personnel interviewed, as well as persons contacted in surveys, indicated that paraprofessionals could be more effective in the program if training, both pre-service and on-the-job, was available.

In a report by the University of New Mexico (September, 1977) on paraprofessional training programs in special education and related fields across the nation, 77 programs are described. Of the 77 programs, 73 are training programs directly tied to a college setting, i.e., junior or senior college. Fifty-four of these programs are preservice programs; nine are inservice programs; and only six offered both services. In many of these training programs (37), participants were required to have a high school degree or a GED for enrollment. Further, only 29 of the 77 programs cited utilized competency-based training. Although most of the programs described included some type of practicum, it is obvious that the majority of these programs focus on meeting the training needs of student level participants, not on the training needs of paraprofessionals who are already employed. It is doubtful that these programs could meet the full training needs of paraprofessionals working with young handicapped children since only 16 programs focus specifically on preschool handicapped children.

3. Other Needs

a. Need to Train Day Care Workers and Preschool Teachers

With the 1973 Congressional mandate to include handicapped children in Head Start enrollment and the recently signed regulation on the rights of handicapped citizens, an increasing number of preschool handicapped children are being served in public child care facilities. The Texas Department of Human Resources reports that 17,000 Title XX eligible children have been identified and that public and private facilities within the state have the capacity to serve 274,448 children under the age of 14. If only half of these children were under the age of 6, the capacity would be 137,224. Using a minimal 8% to estimate the number of handicapped children served in day care programs, as many as 8,978 children are possibly included, many of whom are not yet identified. For the most part, the teacher-staff in day care centers are paraprofessionals. Usually, only high school degrees are required for employment. With the increasing enrollment of handicapped children in day care centers. there exists a need in these settings to train

both the teacher and the aide. While there have been efforts nationally to train Head Start personnel to work with handicapped children, personnel in Title XX day care are ill-prepared to serve the handicapped children who are enrolled. In addition, there are no services available to them to provide such training, and previously provided funds for general training have been cut in half.

The vast needs of day care personnel have been recognized by several junior colleges within the state. They have entered into Child Development Associate (CDA) training programs designed to assist paraprofessionals. However, these programs focus on the non-handicapped child. Direct instruction related to the handicapped child is rarely a focus. One major problem is the fact that the majority of those conducting the CDA training programs are trained in child development and do not have the necessary background in special education to provide training in this area. This situation illustrates the need to integrate training of paraprofessionals to work with handicapped children into existing CDA training programs as an alternative approach. However, other alternatives are still needed for those paraprofessionals who are unable to attend college or university-based training courses. These needs could best be met through field-based training programs.

b. Need to Train Teachers to Use Paraprofessionals

With the increasing use of paraprofessionals in special education classrooms, the role of the teacher is changing. If paraprofessionals are to be utilized to their maximum, teachers and other school supervisory personnel must be prepared to supervise them. Too often this aspect of the teacher's role is neglected in preservice training programs. As trained paraprofessionals enter the classroom, teachers will need training in how to work with them in establishing areas of responsibility, expectations, planning and organization. National surveys have shown that only 5% of the certified teachers have been instructed in the use of paraprofessionals (Klopf, et al., 1972). It is probable that even fewer teachers know how to best use a trained paraprofessional in working with handicapped children. Paraprofessionals can be an invaluable and usable resource only if the teacher is aware of the skills which the paraprofessional possesses and is knowledgeable about ways to best use these skills. There is, then, a need to complement the training of paraprofessionals with instruction for teachers and other supervisors in methods of employing the paraprofessional to maximize the effect in the classroom.

c. Need for Paraprofessional Training Programs

Since the mid-1960's, when educators began to recognize and acknowledge on a national level the need for paraprofessional aides in the preschool classroom, a number of training programs have been developed. A majority of these were government sponsored and directed primarily toward working with children from low-income families. Chief among them were Project Head Start and Day Care. From its inception, Head Start sought to meet the shortage of certified teachers and the lack of job opportunities in the communities served by encouraging employment of indigenous persons. It provides paraprofessional staff development through on-the-job training, structured

learning experiences, series of proficiency levels, testing and evaluation of the trainees, and a pay and title advancement plan (Project Head Start, 1969). In developing Day Care training, the Office of Child Development has noted that traditional college training is perhaps not the best approach to preparing persons to work with young children. They, too, stress on-the-job training, with job status geared to the development of competencies (Day Care #5, 1973). In contrast to these fairly flexible, nationwide programs, Karnes, et al. (1971) implemented a highly structured training program with daily meetings before school and an emphasis on well-planned lessons. These and most other training programs for paraprofessionals at the preschool level have focused on preparing persons to work with children whose primary deviance from the norm is that they are predominantly from low-income families. Preparation to work with children of special needs--those with hearing, vision, orthopedic, and other handicapping conditions--has received far less attention.

The needs of special education have been receiving increasing attention, and some strides have been made in preparing paraprofessionals to work with the handicapped. Under a BEH grant, the League School in New York developed new approaches to train teachers, parents, and paraprofessionals to work with severely disturbed children. The school stressed both practical and theoretical knowledge in a six-week program that included lectures, discussions, classroom observation, and films and demonstrations (League School). The Portage Project in Wisconsin (Schortinghuis and Frohman, 1974) focused on home intervention for handicapped preschoolers. Training for both professionals and paraprofessionals included a one-week preservice workshop plus one-half day per week inservice for all staff and an additional half day for paraprofessionals to work with the training coordinator. One of the most extensive training models was developed at the New Careers Training Lab. (1974). Training areas developed in this study were possible job titles, core areas, techniques for training, possible options, and suggested workshops for inservice training. In another study, Kaufman (1970) reported guidelines for training paraprofessionals and reported on how these were implemented at the Houston Speech and Hearing Center. BEH recognizes this need for training of paraprofessionals through their personnel preparation support.

As previously discussed, other training programs have been developed at junior and senior colleges which follow the traditional approach of course work, usually combined with some type of practicum. Some of these programs have also prepared "training guides," or descriptions of the instructional-course program. For example, the Sinclair Community College (Johnson, 1977) has developed A Handbook for Paraprofessional Training. Again, this commendable approach has limitations in that the individual must be eligible for and enrolled in a college.

While these and other programs have made progress in testing ways in which paraprofessionals can be trained to serve effectively in the preschool classroom with handicapped youngsters, a majority of the programs have either ignored special needs students or failed to provide planned training programs for the paraprofessionals who are or could be working with them. A smaller number of programs have been successful on a limited scale, but they can neither be evaluated nor replicated.

SUMMARY

The evidence supporting the need for training paraprofessionals who are working with young handicapped children is clearly demonstrated at all levels. Several factors have combined to create this situation: (1) the rapidly escalating cost of providing quality educational services to young handicapped children in both public schools and child care facilities; (2) federal and state legislation requiring the provision of free, appropriate educational services for all handicapped children ages three through twenty-one; (3) a rapidly increasing population in Texas and the South and Southwestern region of the country; (4) an increasing number of children identified as needing special education services in the 0 to 6 age range; and (5) the lack of training programs designed specifically for paraprofessionals presently working with young handicapped children.

As educational costs increase and increases occur in the number of handicapped children entering public schools and day care facilities, many are looking to the use of paraprofessional personnel to maintain or improve adult/child ratios. However, the paraprofessional can no longer be used simply as a "cleanup person" who has no direct contact with the children. If paraprofessionals are to be integrated into the educational process and provide quality care for handicapped children, they must be trained to provide this care and teachers must be trained to supervise them in their work.

The training programs which are presently in operation around the state and the country have failed to address themselves to the clear and present need for training employed paraprofessionals working with handicapped children and for teachers/supervisors in the best utilization of such trained personnel. Training for these individuals can best be accomplished through field-based inservice training focusing on the specific needs of preschool handicapped children and the capabilities of both the paraprofessional and the professional. Before training can be truly effective, a core set of competencies must be identified for both public school and child care settings.

The identification of a core set of competencies for working with handicapped children allows for the interfacing of these competencies with actual job requirements. In this way, flexibility can be built into a training model that allows for the development of basic skills as well as those required by different sites and job descriptions.

This background information from the original proposal submitted to the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped established the need for training of paraprofessionals. The project, "Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training" was funded to provide field-based inservice training for a three-year period beginning in June 1978.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES TO DATE

Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training is designed to address the in-service training needs of two target groups. The primary target group is Paraprofessionals who work with young handicapped children and the secondary target group includes supervising teachers or others whom paraprofessionals assist. Training is designed to meet inservice needs of each of the following systems or settings serving young handicapped children:

1. Public school Early Childhood classes for the Handicapped,
2. Public school mainstream classes for kindergarten and first grade,
3. Private child care centers/schools in which handicapped children are enrolled, and
4. Public child care centers which enroll handicapped children.

Primary training emphasis is on training for Public School Early Childhood teachers of the handicapped and Public Child Care personnel since these are the settings in which the majority of the handicapped are served.

During the first year of this project, previous staff work with paraprofessionals was reviewed and integrated into Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training. Through a field survey, roles and responsibilities of teachers and assistant teachers in each of the above settings were identified. Based on this information and a review of pertinent literature and materials, core competencies were identified and training sessions focusing on various topic areas of concern were designed. Inservice training, conducted in selected sites across the state, was provided for more than 800 attendees. Through 20 workshops of one-half-to-two full days each, 6,025 participant training hours were delivered during the project year ending in May, 1979.

During the second year of the project paraprofessional competencies were reviewed and revised by the project Advisory Board, project staff and key site personnel. Thirty worksessions addressing these competencies were designed and training conducted in eight locations throughout the state. By the end of the second full year (May 1980) more than 1,000 persons participated in one or more training workshops. Approximately 350 persons received 16 or more hours of training and 300 persons received an average of four hours of training.

Multiple teaching strategies are used throughout training (demonstrations, role play, discussion, film strips and video, simulation, minimal lecture) and print materials are used only for follow-up activities. Examples of the training topic areas include: What Is A Handicap?; Observing and Identifying Children in Need of Referral; Understanding Parents; Talking to Learn and Learning to Talk; Language Development Through Storytelling; Behavior Problems; Adapting the Classroom; Selecting, Using, and Adapting Toys and Materials; Playground and Outdoor Activities; Infant Care; and Parent Programs.

Project evaluation includes collection of demographic data on each participant and on going recording of specific sessions attended. Each

training session (approximately 3 hours on one topic) or workshop (one-to-two days on several session topics) was evaluated for overall effectiveness and participant reaction. Depending on the specific topic, understanding of the session content was evaluated through pre-post written questionnaires, simulation or role play activities within the session, individual questioning during or after the session, or tape-recorded interviews with randomly selected participants.

Dissemination of project information has been limited to staff presentations at conferences and responses to requests for information. Because of funding cutbacks, written training session materials for distribution have not been produced. However, as an outgrowth of this project and recognizing the need for written information about the handicapped child, the Texas Department of Human Resources (TDHR) contracted for the development of a procedural guide, When You Care for Handicapped Children, which is now available from TDHR.

DESIGN OF PROJECT AND TRAINING

Consistent with current state education planning, the APT project provides training which is generic, not categorical. The project is not designed to diagnose or label children or to train paraprofessionals to do so. Identification, numbers, and types of handicapped children served is the function and responsibility of the school or center in which the children are enrolled. Information about the number of children served is collected, however, from local personnel and summarized for project records.

Inservice training has been designed to meet local site parameters while providing paraprofessionals with the knowledge and skills for working with the handicapped children in their care. Competencies and associated training for paraprofessionals must interface with the training and tasks of supervising teachers, other supervisors, and trainers within the different systems (public and non-public schools and centers) to be effective. Therefore, competencies were developed for paraprofessionals to interface with competency clusters identified by TEA for special education teachers and those developed for Head Start and Day Care programs.

Competencies must be compatible with the job descriptions under which the paraprofessionals are employed. Therefore, job descriptions were reviewed and priority training areas identified on system/site-specific bases. It was evident from these job descriptions that paraprofessional responsibilities vary in accordance with the employing institutions. Therefore, alternatives-competency training were developed to meet these differing needs.

Differences also exist in the logistical training parameters (time allocations/schedules, type/format preference, location/space availability and preference, etc.). Therefore, different approaches/arrangements are used in training. Practicum training is not included as a specific objective, because the entire training program is directed to those persons who are already in field-based settings, i.e., already employed. Feedback is continually obtained from participants and from their supervisors regarding training conducted, classroom implementation, and needs for further training. On-site observation is conducted for a sample of participants, as appropriate to the individual site.

Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training is not a university-based training program and college credits or grades are not a motivational device. Certification, career ladders, or an increase in pay are not external motivations offered by the training project as these are the in-service responsibilities of the local employing agency. In many cases paraprofessionals attending training have only partial or no compensatory time to attend training. Therefore, it is absolutely essential for the project staff to provide training professionals can recognize as valuable to them and which they can use immediately. It is also essential to provide training which is interesting and motivating enough for participants to return to the next sequence of training sessions.

In summary, the following points are basic to the Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training Project:

1. Paraprofessionals are a less homogeneous group than college-trained public school teachers, with considerable variance in their previous educational levels, training, and experience. Therefore, training must be tailored to the needs of individuals as well as to the site or system in which they work.

2. Supervising teachers of paraprofessionals should be trained in effective communication with the paraprofessional, in knowledge and understanding of the paraprofessional's abilities and interests, and in observational and supervisory techniques.

3. Training must be highly motivating, meeting the interests and needs of participants. Traditional approaches of lecture and assigned reading are not compatible with the prior education and training of paraprofessionals. Therefore, a variety of other adult teaching strategies must be used.

4. Evaluation of training is essential in determining whether the participants' needs are being met as well as in determining the effectiveness of the training.

COMPETENCIES

Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training is competency-based, and designed to meet the working needs of employed individuals. Consequently, in addition to identification of competencies, the variables of prior training and experience, availability of training time, and job description requirements, must be considered in the design and delivery of on-site training.

During the first year of the project, initial work for identifying training needs and for developing an Alternatives-Competency Model was completed, including a review and report of relevant literature and other programs focusing on paraprofessionals working with young handicapped children. This information has been summarized in the document, Paraprofessionals in Early Education of the Handicapped: Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography (Evans and Iscoe, 1977) and entered into the ERIC system. Competency statements from other programs and local job descriptions or requirements were reviewed. Based on this information and on Advisory Board recommendations, a survey of selected sites throughout the state was conducted, with data analysis completed during the second year. A synthesis of this information resulted in initial identification of competencies needed by paraprofessionals who work with young handicapped children. This initial review indicated a wide range of educational background (varying from completion of fourth grade through completion of an MA degree in another field), and experience (ranging from no experience to eight years). Logistical training parameters also vary greatly. Some sites require a specified number of inservice training hours or training days, while other sites make no such provision. In some sites, content for training is specified by administrative staff, while in other sites training content is generated from participants.

During the second year a report of this survey, Responsibilities and Training Needs of Paraprofessionals: A Survey of Those Who Work With Young Handicapped Children (Evans, 1980) was completed and entered into the ERIC system. Competency statements were refined, elaborated and verified through review by advisory board members, field supervisors, and head teachers. The competencies were grouped into the following areas:

I. Position Orientation

II. Interpersonal Relations

III. Basic Child Care and Management

IV. Classroom Planning and Organization

V. Classroom Instruction

A complete description of these competency areas is included in Appendix B. These competency statements were also reviewed by the Early Childhood Task Force and appropriate parts incorporated into State Certification Requirements for Teachers of Young Children.

WORKSESSIONS

To address the identified competencies, related content information was outlined and divided into "Worksessions" Logistical parameters of inservice training time at various sites and recommendations from the Advisory Board and Center Directors indicated the need to divide training periods into 2 to 4 hour time blocks. Therefore, worksessions focusing on a single topic area were designed to last approximately 3 hours each, with additional information and activities included to expand a session to 4 hours when appropriate. Each of these training sessions focuses on a topic or content area related to the identified competencies.

The need for specific, action-oriented training session activities which are directly related to children within the classroom rather than training which relies upon print materials, lecture or abstract and theoretical information was also identified. Therefore, each training session has been designed for minimal reliance upon lecture, with print materials used only as follow-up information. The sessions focus on the use of demonstration, simulation and role play, audiovisual materials, question and answer periods, and small group discussion, with modeling of instructional techniques and interaction throughout.

In each field-based site, a survey is conducted to identify participation needs. Worksessions are then selected and combined to meet the specific needs of the local site within the available training time period. "Workshops" of one to two days in length are planned with local supervisory personnel and conducted on-site. Each workshop includes two to six worksessions, depending on the time available.

Three such training workshops are conducted during the year for each project site. Continuity of training is planned in advance with the local director of special education, program director, or other person responsible for inservice planning. In designing training sessions to address the specific topic areas, existing materials have been used, including those previously developed by SEDL staff, and additional materials have been developed as needed.

A listing and summary description of the worksession topics is included in Appendix C. The interface between the identified competencies and these Worksessions is outlined in Appendix D.

TRAINING CONDUCTED

Field-based training conducted during the first and second year of the project (June 1978 through May 1980) are summarized by site in the following sections. A third year report will be completed at the end of May 1981, upon completion of the project year.

FIRST YEAR

During the first year of the project, the intention was to focus on identifying competencies, developing training sessions, and pilot testing the sessions at a local level prior to moving into wider training. However, the need for training was so great and so many requests were received, that more training was conducted during the first year than originally projected. During the first year of the project, 7,000 participant training hours were delivered for more than 1,000 attendees in rural and urban locations throughout the state. It should be noted that although most people participated in the entire sequence of training workshops, additional people attended several of the workshops as well. The project staff selected training sites as identified in the initial proposal. However, actual participants at each site were selected by the local site supervisors or directors. In most cases, the same people attended each training session. However, staff turnover among paraprofessionals means that new people are added throughout the year. During the first year, twenty training sessions were developed and conducted at least one time. An overview of the training sites, the sessions conducted, and participant evaluations are included in the following section.

SECOND YEAR

During the second year the project, training sessions were revised and additional ones designed to meet field identified needs. By the end of the second year, approximately 30 worksessions have been designed and used in actual training. In addition, workshops have been developed for other training which was a spin-off from Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training. For example, in several locations, Title XX personnel requested training on general child growth and development as well as infant care. In addition, contracts were received from one Title XX Region which serves handicapped infants from birth through 6 to design and develop specialized training. Although these training contracts and sessions were not a direct part of the BEH contract, they were related to, or spin-offs, from the BEH contract.

During the second year of the project, approximately 7,500 participant contact training hours were delivered for over 1,000 attendees. To meet the specific requests within the Austin area, two Invitational Workshops focusing on topics related to general child growth and development, with some sessions on the handicapped, were held for private and public child care personnel.

The Training Sites, Training Alternative, Number of Participants, Actual Number of Contact Hours, and Participant Training Hours are summarized in the following pages. More detailed descriptions of the actual training, including descriptions of training sites, lists of participants, descriptions of sessions, and evaluations are included in Appendix F for each site.

FIRST YEAR TRAINING

June 1978 - May 1979

SITE	TRAINING ALTERNATIVE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	NO. OF HOURS	=	PPH
Austin Areas (Open to All)	Mini Conference November 1978	46	6		600
Child, Inc.	1/2 Day Workshop September 1978	31	6		186
Child, Inc.	Full Day Workshop December 1978	27	3		71
Child, Inc.	1/2 Day Workshop February 1979	30	3		90
Child, Inc.	1/2 Day Workshop May 1979	30	3		90
Abilene ESC	1/2 Day Training Session August 1978	9	3		27
	Full Day Workshop January 1979	4	3		12
	Full Day Workshop March 1979	4	3		12
Houston	Full Day Workshop October 1978	31	6		186
	Full Day Workshop January 1979	28	6		168
	Full Day Workshop March 1979	36	6		216
Midland/Odessa	Training of Site Trainers September 1978	5	4		20
	Full Day Workshop September 1978	46	6		276
	Training of Site Trainers November 1978	5	4		20
	Evening Workshop November 1978	62	4		248
	1/2 Day Workshop November 1978	19	3		57

FIRST YEAR TRAINING - continued

June 1978 - May 1979

SITE	TRAINING ALTERNATIVE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	NO. OF HOURS	= PPH
Midland/Odessa (continued)	Training of Site Trainers March 1979	4	4	16
	Evening Workshop March 1979	58	4	232
	1/2 Day Workshop	41	3	123
Temple	Full Day Workshop September 1978	16	6	96
	Full Day Workshop October 1978	17	6	102
	Full Day Workshop February 1979	11	6	66
Valley	Two Day Workshop October 1978	61	12	732
	Day and 1/2 Workshop January 1979	45	12	540
	Observation Feedback Session January 1979	6	3	18
	Day and 1/2 Workshop March 1979	35	9	315
	Observation Feedback Session April 1979	6	3	18
Wintergarten	Two Day Workshop October 1978	56	12	672
	Day and 1/2 Workshop February 1979	42	9	378
	Observation Feedback Session February 1979	6	3	18
	Day and 1/2 Workshop April 1979	35	9	315
	Observation Feedback Session April 1979	6	3	18
Catholic Diocese Houston	Half Day Session January 1979	29	3	87
			TOTAL - Per Participant Hour	6,025

SECOND YEAR TRAINING

June 1979 - May 1980

SITE	TRAINING ALTERNATIVE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	NO. OF HOURS	= PPH
Hays, Caldwell, Blanco Counties	Workshop August 1979	25	6½	162
Head Start San Marcos	Workshop October 1979			
	Morning:	23	3	69
	Afternoon:	19	3	57
	Workshop January 1980	22	2½	55
	Workshop March 1980	21	5	105
Blanco	Technical Assistance November 1979	5	6	30
San Marcos	Technical Assistance December 1979	4	5	20
	Technical Assistance February 1980	14	2	28
	Technical Assistance February 1980	4	3	12
	Technical Assitance May 1980	5	5	25
Lockhart	Technical Assistance December 1979	4	6	24
	Technical Assistance September 1979	7	5	35
	Technical Assitance October 1979	7	5	35
	Technical Assitance February 1980	5	5	25
	Technical Assistance May 1980	6	5	30
Temple/Belton Head Start	Workshop February 1980	12	6	72
	Workshop October 1979	16	6	96

SECOND YEAR TRAINING - continued

June 1979 - May 1980

SITE	TRAINING ALTERNATIVE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	NO. OF HOURS	= PPH
Seguin Head Start	Workshop August 1979	14	6	84
	Workshop October 1979	13	6	78
	Workshop June 1979	13	3	39
	Technical Assistance June 1980	1	6	6
Spring Branch I.S.D. ECH Personnel	Workshop November 1979	20	6	120
	Observation Technical Assistance November 1979	20	4	80
Odessa (Day Care, Head Start, College personnel)	Workshop October 1979	93	4	372
	Staff Consultation October 1979	5	2	10
	Workshop January 1980	62	4	248
	Staff Consultation January 1980	5	2	10
	Workshop April 1980	72	4	288
Abilene I.S.D. ECH Personnel	Workshop April 1980	12	3	36
	Workshop August 1979	30	6	180
Child, Inc. Head Start	Full Day Workshop November 1979	80	6	480
Austin (All Area Invitational)	Full Day Workshop November 1979	86	6	516
	Evening Workshop November 1979	39	2	78
	Full Day Workshop November 1979	81	6	486

SECOND YEAR TRAINING - continued

June 1979 - May 1980

SITE	TRAINING ALTERNATIVE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	NO. OF HOURS	= PPH
Austin (continued)	Full Day Workshop March 1980	115	6	690
Wintergarten-Texas Migrant Council	Day and 1/2 Workshop October 1979	33	9	297
	2 Day Workshop January 1980	64	12	768
	Day and 1/2 Workshop March 1980	64	9	576
Valley Area Texas Migrant Council	2 Day Workshop October 1979	46	12	542
	Full Day Workshop January 1980	80	6	480
	2 Day Workshop March 1980	70	12	840
		TOTAL - Per Participant Hours		8,160

PPH - Per Participant Hours

Mini Conference - Invitational Conference covering several topics - open to anyone.

Workshop - Two or more simultaneous sessions within a given time period.

Session - One topic covered for a given time period.

NOTE: For those training sessions already conducted, actual number of participants is cited. Projected number of participants for further training sessions are stated as reported by site contracts.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As a direct result of project activities and staff experience, the Texas Department of Human Resources (TDHR) contracted with the Special Projects Division for the development and publication of a procedural guide for Title XX Child Care providers. When You Care for Handicapped Children and 24 related pamphlets are now available from TDHR. Consultant review was provided by special education personnel of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), possible ways for public schools and day care to integrate services has been included in the guide. Also, interagency agreements are now under development between TEA and TDHR. Thus the Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training project has stimulated the potential for long term effects and more effective services for handicapped children.

CONTRACTED TRAINING

Only a limited number of sites receive direct services under the Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training grant. However, the training sessions and staff experience developed under this grant are being utilized by other sites which have contracted for similar training. Knowledge of the training has spread primarily by word-of-mouth -- participants have recommended training to other groups. Examples of other short-term training contracts include:

- Victoria, Texas, Tender Loving Care Infant Center for Handicapped Infants
- Laredo, Texas, Ruth B. Cowl Rehabilitation Center
- Panhandle Area, Texas Migrant Council
- Costal Bend Area, Texas Migrant Council
- Victoria, Texas, Educational Service Center
- Richardson, Texas, Educational Service Center
- Houston, Texas, Educational Service Center

INVITATIONAL WORKSHOPS

Four Invitational Workshops have been conducted to address private and public child care personnel in the Austin area who are not included under the APT contract. A small workshop fee was charged to provide money for materials and to insure preregistration. These workshops have been successful with maximum registration each time. Announcements and Agendas for these workshops are included in Appendix G.

DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

Dissemination has not been a high priority, primarily because of limited funds. Budget requests for both years were reduced and development of written materials was eliminated. Consequently, there are no written training materials to disseminate. Staff time budgeted to this project is used completely in preparing and delivering training to those sites included in the proposal. There is no "free" staff time to add additional sites. Dissemination has focused on providing information to others about the project through conference presentations and submission of reports to the ERIC system.

During the first year, the field survey of training needs resulted in numerous requests for additional information; a presentation at the Texas Council for Exceptional Children state convention resulted in requests for on-site training and for information about scheduled training; informal communication by individuals participating in training sessions generated additional requests for training; and an announcement of project-award carried in the state newsletter of the Texas Office of Early Childhood Development which was picked up and carried in the state Mental Health and Mental Retardation Newsletter also stimulated requests. The result was an abundance of requests for additional information, on-site training, and use of training materials. Unfortunately, these requests could not be met within the budget and scope of this project. The response from the field clearly reinforces the identified need for practical, applied level training of paraprofessionals. In addition, requests are being received for similar training for college degreed teachers, a target group not included in this project. This is, however, a reinforcement of the BEH identified needs for inservice training of regular teachers.

Other first-year dissemination activities included a project presentation for the bi-annual meeting of Regional Service Center directors, and a project presentation at the national CEC Convention, and a full-day CEC Institute presentation. During the second year a description of the APT Project was included in the R&D Information Exchange newsletter which reaches the SEDL six-state region. In addition, the project staff conducted a 2-day workshop on the handicapped child for selected key state education personnel from the SEDL six-state region as a part of the R&D Regional Exchange Program.

Numerous presentations, many of which were mini-workshops, were presented for various groups. These presentations are listed on the following pages.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

"Easy Science Activities for the Preschool" Austin Association for the Education of Young Children. Austin, Texas. May 1980. (Grace)

Working With Mexican American Parents of Handicapped Children. International Council for Exceptional Children Convention. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. April 1980. (Evans, Grace)

"Training Paraprofessionals" Texas Developmental Disabilities Conference, Dallas, Texas. April 1980. (Grace)

"Training Paraprofessionals" International Council for Exceptional Children Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. April 1980. (Grace)

Session Leader. The Unfulfilled Promise: Conference on Understanding Perinatal Grief and Disappointment. March of Dimes. Austin, Texas. April 1980. (Evans)

Working with Parents. First Annual Conference, Parents and Professionals: A Team Approach to Working with the Special Student. Abilene, Texas. April 1980. (Evans)

"Behavior Problems" and "Easy Science Activities". San Marcos Association for the Education of Young Children. San Marcos, Texas. April, 1980. (Whitworth)

"Learning Through the Senses" Dallas Association for the Education of Young Children. Dallas, Texas. March 1980. (Bricker)

'Training Needs of Infant Caregivers: What to Talk About" Triple T Consortium Conference. Dallas, Texas. February 1980. (Grace)

"Teaching Toddlers" Annual Conference, Austin Association for the Education of Young Children. Austin, Texas. February 1980. (Grace)

"Activities for Infants" Annual Conference - Austin Association for the Education of Young Children, Austin, Texas. February, 1980. (Whitworth)

"The Art of Mainstreaming" Austin Association for the Education of Young Children. Austin, Texas. February 1980. (Bricker)

"Storytelling for Infants and Toddlers" Association for Education of Young Children Conference. Austin, Texas. February 1980. (Evans)

"When You Care for Handicapped Children" Teaching Texas Tots Conference. Dallas, Texas. January 1980. (Evans)

"Training Needs of Infant Caregivers" Teaching Texas Tots Conference. Dallas, Texas. January 1980. (Bricker, Grace)

"Communicating With Children" Austin Council for Exceptional Children. Austin, Texas. January 1980. (Grace)

"Training Paraprofessionals" Texas Association of Child Care Workers. Austin, Texas. November 1979. (Bricker)

"Art in the Preschool Classroom" Child Care Course for Austin Association for the Education of Young Children. Austin, Texas. November 1979. (Grace)

"Toy Tales" Austin's Celebration of the International Year of the Child. Austin, Texas. November 1979. (Bricker, Grace, Evans, Whitworth)

"Science in the Mainstream Classroom" Child Care Course for Austin Association for the Education of Young Children. Austin, Texas. November 1979. (Bricker)

"Working With Parents" Teacher Training Conference, Brownsville, Texas. November 1979. (Evans)

"Behavior and Preschoolers" Austin Natural Science Association. October 1979. (Evans)

R&D Speaks: Special Education in K-3rd Grade. Austin, Texas. September 1979. (Evans, Bricker, Grace)

Conference Summary - Panelist; The Second Texas Infancy Conference. Austin, Texas. June 1979. (Evans)

"Understanding the Family of the Terminally Ill Child" Early Childhood Special Education Inservice. Richardson, Texas. May 1979. (Evans)

Young Handicapped Children and the Paraprofessional. National Council on Training and Utilization of Paraprofessionals. Austin, Texas. April 1979. (Evans)

"Practical Approaches, Materials and Activities for Mainstreaming Young Handicapped Children" CEC Institute, 57th International Convention, Council for Exceptional Children.. Dallas, Texas. April 1979. (Bricker)

Paraprofessionals in Early Childhood Settings, 57th International Convention, Council for Exceptional Children. Dallas, Texas. April 1979. (Evans)

"Teaching Children with Language Problems" Austin Association for the Education of Young Children. Austin, Texas. February 1979. (Bricker)

APPENDIX B

COMPETENCIES FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS WHO WORK WITH YOUNG HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

COMPETENCIES FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS WHO WORK WITH YOUNG HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

As a part of Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training (APT), inservice training grant supported by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped competencies have been identified and refined to meet the needs of paraprofessionals in working with young handicapped children. Identification of these competencies was based on reviews of the literature, related competencies from similar projects, and written job descriptions; the results of a field-based survey of teachers and teacher aides; and the advice and review of the APT Advisory Committee.

These competencies have been identified in general terms as relevant for paraprofessionals employed in Public School, Day Care, and Head Start settings in which young handicapped children are served. Variations within and between these types of settings must be considered in prioritizing and conducting training to meet these competencies.

As the focus is on the handicapped child, it is assumed that the paraprofessional has basic knowledge and skills in working with non-handicapped children. When this assumption cannot be made, the competencies must be expanded or additional competencies added.

The order in which the competencies and associated points are listed does not imply prioritizing or importance. The following competencies include the areas of:

I. POSITION ORIENTATION

II. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

III. BASIC CHILD CARE AND MANAGEMENT

IV. CLASSROOM PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

V. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

I. POSITION ORIENTATION

The paraprofessional will recognize basic roles/responsibilities of the instructional aide within the context of the employment position. The paraprofessional will:

A. Understand the educational objectives of the employing school/center and employment contract

B. Understand the regulations, practices, policies, and other administrative procedures of the employing school/center

C. Understand the ethics and standards of the position including confidentiality of information, and rights of parents

D. Understand federal, state, and local regulations and policy regarding handicapped children including, but not limited to awareness of the legal requirements of PL 94-142 and Section 504 and awareness of community resources

E. Understand his/her responsibilities in recognizing and developing his/her abilities in the following competency areas or other needs for additional professional assistance or training

II. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

The paraprofessional will recognize the responsibilities and duties of the assisting role and will recognize and maintain positive interpersonal relationships with the children, parents, teacher, and supervisory/support personnel. The paraprofessional will:

A. Maintain a cooperative relationship with <u>teacher and other classroom personnel</u>

1. Recognize teacher-aide role in assisting teacher in carrying out classroom duties and responsibilities
2. Recognize duties and responsibilities of teacher (and other adults) in the classroom
3. Independently complete assigned duties and responsibilities
4. Initiate own activities and communicate personal needs for clarification of duties, instruction and/or training

B. Establish and maintain attention, motivation, and rapport with <u>handicapped children</u>

1. Recognize individual characteristics, needs and rights of each child, including cultural/language differences
2. Communicate with and respond to children in a positive, non-threatening manner
3. Communicate expectations clearly and provide appropriate verbal and non-verbal feedback

C. Establish and maintain rapport with parent(s)/guardians of handicapped children

1. Recognize importance and rights of parent(s)/guardians, including cultural/language differences in the educational process
2. Recognize own role in relation to parent(s)/guardians

II. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS (Cont'd.)

3. Communicate with parent(s)/guardians within framework of assistant-role in a positive, non-threatening manner
4. Understand rights of parents

D. Maintain cooperative working relationship with <u>supervisory/support/related services personnel</u>

1. Recognize appropriate channels of communication/authority
2. Recognize appropriate sources of information
3. Recognize own role in relation to supervisory/support/related services personnel
4. Respond to and initiate communication with supervisory/support/related services personnel within framework of assistant-role in a positive manner
5. Understand responsibilities in relation to related services (physical, speech, occupational therapies)

III. BASIC CHILD CARE AND MANAGEMENT

The paraprofessional will assist the teacher in providing basic routine and emergency health care and basic classroom behavior management. The paraprofessional will:

A. Assist teacher in attending to daily health and physical needs of children

1. Demonstrate awareness and skill in providing routine health care and attending to physical needs of children (See also V.C)
2. Demonstrate awareness of health/physical factors relating to specific handicapping conditions
3. Observe for and report factors related to and affecting health and physical conditions of children
4. Provide specialized care related to specific health factors and conditions of handicapped children as directed

B. Understand routine child aid and emergency care procedures

1. Know appropriate procedures for routine child aid and emergency care, including location of supplies and emergency assistance
2. Provide appropriate child aid and/or emergency care and complete required reporting, as necessary

C. Assist teacher in daily routine and management

1. Assist children in learning and following classroom rules and routines
2. Assist children in carrying out instructions and directions
3. Assist and direct children in use of materials and equipment
4. Understand and follow a positive approach in guiding and managing child behavior

IV. CLASSROOM PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

The paraprofessional will assist the teacher in planning and organizing an appropriate environment and curriculum for young handicapped children. The paraprofessional will:

A. Assist teacher in maintaining a safe environment

1. Recognize unsafe conditions with regard to structural elements, furnishings, weather, and landscape
2. Recognize unsafe materials and equipment, actions and activities
3. Remove or change and/or report unsafe conditions or redirect activity

B. Assist in planning and/or adapting physical arrangements of the environment as necessary for specific types of handicapping conditions

1. Recognize differences/similarities of physical arrangements needed for handicapped/non-handicapped/types of handicaps
2. Recognize necessary adaptations of equipment and materials
3. Assist in organizing and maintaining organization of materials and equipment

C. Assist in planning and scheduling of instructional program

1. Assist in long and short range planning of instructional program and activities
2. Assist in planning individualized instructional program for children, based on the IEP/ARD results
3. Assist in maintaining necessary records and files
4. Assist in preparation of materials and use of equipment

V. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS

The paraprofessional will assist the teacher in daily observation and child instruction. The paraprofessional will:

A. Recognize normal development including bilingual/bicultural background and the possible effects of various handicapping conditions in the major skill areas of self-help, gross and fine motor, language, socio-emotional, and cognitive development

B. Assist teacher in assessment of children and evaluation of instructional program

1. Observe, report and/or record child-behavior in a systematic manner
2. Assist in completion of various informal assessments, as requested
3. Report behavior and performance of children relative to needs and skill acquisition
4. Report information and observations relative to assessment and evaluation of instructional program

C. Assist teacher in implementation of daily activities and child-instruction

1. Plan and prepare for individual or group lessons and activities as assigned
2. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for development of self-help skills
3. Recognize and initiate adaptations of instructional materials or activities as necessary
4. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for language stimulation and development

V. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS (Cont'd.)

5. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for gross and fine motor development, including outside as well as inside activities
6. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for increasing self-esteem and creative expression
7. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for pre-academic and academic areas, as appropriate

APPENDIX C

WORKSESSION TOPICS

WORKSESSION TOPICS

As a part of Alternatives for Paraprofessional Training (APT), an in-service training grant supported by Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, a series of training sessions have been developed and conducted. Because the responsibilities and training needs of teachers vary at different sites, selection of specific training sessions to meet the needs of those who work with young handicapped children is based on individual-site training needs surveys.

The following titles and summary descriptions provide an overview of sessions developed to date.

1. WHAT IS A HANDICAP? (effects of disabilities; general ways to use and adapt equipment and materials; special equipment)

---

2. THE ART OF MAINSTREAMING (daily routines, activities, and transitions for easier management; observing and informal learning)

---

3. TEACHERS AND ASSISTANTS - WORKING TOGETHER (roles and responsibilities; improving communication; local requirements, procedures and duties)

---

4. PLANNING AND SCHEDULING (daily and weekly planning for general activities, small group and individual instruction; individual programming for the handicapped)

---

5. COMMUNITY RESOURCES (finding and using community resources; information on state and national resources for information and services; legal rights to services)

---

6. PARENT INVOLVEMENT (why, how and when to involve parents; resources for parents of handicapped children; communicating with parents; ideas for parent bulletin boards)

---

7. UNDERSTANDING PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN (parental reactions and feelings; suggestions for working with parents; rights of parents; information referral sources)

---

8. COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN (communicating rules and instructions; use of social language to develop cooperation and self-esteem in young children)

---

9. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS (prevention of accidents, indoor and outdoor; adapting the environment for different types of handicaps)

---

10. CHILDREN AND HEALTH (recognizing and preventing health problems; immediate isolation and care; maintaining records)

---

11. EMERGENCY CHILD AID (how to handle emergencies until help arrives)

---

12. ADAPTING CLASSROOMS FOR THE HANDICAPPED (planning and arranging the classroom; easy-to-make adaptations of furniture, equipment and materials)

---

13. BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS (prevention of behavior problems; management of problems which occur)

---

14. INFANT CARE (development and basic care of children under the age of 12 months; feeding care, and stimulation activities)

---

15. THE TODDLER (what to expect of children under the age of three; observing for possible problems; what adults can do to help)

---

16. THE PRESCHOOLER (learning and changes in 3 to 6 year olds; screening and referring for possible problems; routines and activities)

---

17. THE ELEMENTARY YEARS (physical, emotional, and learning changes of the 6 to 10 year old; observing and referring for problems; individualizing for the handicapped child)

---

18. IDENTIFYING CHILDREN IN NEED OF REFERRAL (how to observe for possible problems; suggestions for referral, follow-up classroom adaptations)

---

19. INFANTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (recognizing problems of infants; referral and special care; stimulation activities for home and center programs)

---

20. USING MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT (how to use commercial materials for individualized learning; adapting for different ages and handicaps; special equipment)

---

21. MAKING AND USING LEARNING MATERIALS (how to make inexpensive manipulatives and other learning materials; specialized needs of the handicapped child)

---

22. USING MATERIALS WITH SPECIAL CHILDREN (analyzing materials for skills/concepts developed; identifying and discussing attributes of various materials; presenting materials to handicapped children; organizing materials according to level of difficulty)

---

23. LISTENING TO LEARN (how children learn through hearing; sequences of auditory learning; recognizing problems of hearing; activities to develop listening skills)

---

24. TALKING TO LEARN AND LEARNING TO TALK (development of speech and language; identifying problems; working with the child with speech and language problems in the classroom)

---

25. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH STORYTELLING (selection and use of books for language development; individual vs. group storytelling; questioning)

---

26. SELF-HELP SKILLS (steps in teaching self-help skills such as toileting, washing, eating and dressing)

---

27. MOVEMENT AND LEARNING (how children learn through body movement; sequences of motor learning; identifying motor problems; indoor and outdoor activities for motor development and eye-hand coordination)

---

28. PLAYGROUND AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES (small and large group outdoor activities; adapting physical activities for the handicapped child)

---

29. ENHANCING SELF-ESTEEM THROUGH PUPPETS AND DRAMA (creative ways to stimulate language and self expression; development and expression of feelings; making and using puppets)

---

30. ARTS AND CRAFTS FOR THE HANDICAPPED (sensory approaches to learning; adapting and managing arts and crafts activities for the handicapped)

_____

31. SCIENCE FOR THE PRESCHOOL (activities, materials and ideas for the science learning center; learning through concrete experiences and discovery)

_____

32. HEARING PROBLEMS (indicators of hearing problems; types of impairment; special therapy, training, and classroom adaptations)

_____

APPENDIX D

INTERFACE OF COMPETENCIES AND TRAINING SESSION

DESCRIPTION OF INTERFACE BETWEEN COMPETENCIES AND RELATED TRAINING SESSION TOPICS

In the following section identified competencies are listed in conjunction with the specific training sessions which address each competency area. In some cases the training sessions cover more than one competency area and consequently are listed twice. In addition to training sessions already developed, sessions projected for development are also listed.

I. POSITION ORIENTATION

The paraprofessional will recognize basic roles/responsibilities of the instructional aide within the context of the employment position.

The paraprofessional will:

A. Understand the educational objectives of the employing school/center and employment contract

B. Understand the regulations, practices, policies, and other administrative procedures of the employing school/center

C. Understand the ethics and standards of the position including confidentiality of information, and rights of parents

D. Understand federal, state, and local regulations and policy regarding handicapped children including, but not limited to awareness of the legal requirements of PL 94-142 and Section 504 and awareness of community resources

E. Understand his/her responsibilities in recognizing and developing his/her abilities in the following competency areas or other needs for additional professional assistance or training

Related Training Sessions

Teachers and Assistants Together

To Be Developed

Legal Aspects and Confidentiality

Training directly related to the local site policies or employment practices (A, B, and parts of C, D, and E) is considered the responsibility of the local agency.

II. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

The paraprofessional will recognize the responsibilities and duties of the assisting role and will recognize and maintain positive interpersonal relationships with the children, parents, teacher, and supervisory/support personnel. The paraprofessional will:

A. Maintain a cooperative relationship with <u>teacher and other classroom personnel</u>

1. Recognize teacher-aide role in assisting teacher in carrying out classroom duties and responsibilities

2. Recognize duties and responsibilities of teacher (and other adults) in the classroom

3. Independently complete assigned duties and responsibilites

4. Initiate own activities and communicate personal needs for clarification of duties, instruction and/or training

B. Establish and maintain attention, motivation, and rapport with <u>handicapped children</u>

1. Recognize individual characteristics, needs and rights of each child, including cultural/language differences

2. Communicate with and respond to children in a positive, non-threatening manner

3. Communicate expectations clearly and provide appropriate verbal and non-verbal feedback

C. Establish and maintain rapport with parent(s)/guardians of handicapped children

1. Recognize importance and rights of parent(s)/guardians, including cultural/language differences in the educational process

2. Recognize own role in relation to parent(s)/guardians

3. Communicate with parent(s)/guardians within framework of assistant-role in a positive, non-threatening manner

4. Understand rights of parents

II. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS (Cont'd.)

D. Maintain cooperative working relationship with supervisory/support/related services personnel

1. Recognize appropriate channels of communication/authority

2. Recognize appropriate sources of information

3. Recognize own role in relation to supervisory/support/related services personnel

4. Respond to and initiate communication with supervisory/support/related services personnel within framework of assistant-role in a positive manner

5. Understand responsibilities in relation to related services (physical, speech, occupational therapies)

Related Training Sessions

Teachers and Assistants Together

What Is a Handicap?

The Art of Mainstreaming

Communicating with Children

Behavior Problems

Parent Involvement

Understanding Parents of Handicapped Children

Community Resources

III. BASIC CHILD CARE AND MANAGEMENT

The paraprofessional will assist the teacher in providing basic routine and emergency health care and basic classroom behavior management. The paraprofessional will:

A. Assist teacher in attending to daily health and physical needs of children

1. Demonstrate awareness and skill in providing routine health care and attending to physical needs of children (See also V-C)
2. Demonstrate awareness of health/physical factors relating to specific handicapping conditions
3. Observe for and report factors related to and affecting health and physical conditions of children
4. Provide specialized care related to specific health factors and conditions of handicapped children as directed

B. Understand routine child aid and emergency care procedures

1. Know appropriate procedures for routine child aid and emergency care, including location of supplies and emergency assistance
2. Provide appropriate child aid and/or emergency care and complete required reporting, as necessary

C. Assist teacher in daily routine and management

1. Assist children in learning and following classroom rules and routines
2. Assist children in carrying out instructions and directions
3. Assist and direct children in use of materials and equipment
4. Understand and follow a positive approach in guiding and managing child behavior

Related Training Sessions

Children and Health

Identifying Children in Need of Referral

Emergency Child Aid

Planning and Scheduling

Behavior Problems

Communicating With Children

IV. CLASSROOM PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

The paraprofessional will assist the teacher in planning and organizing an appropriate environment and curriculum for young handicapped children.

The paraprofessional will:

A. Assist teacher in maintaining a safe environment

1. Recognize unsafe conditions with regard to structural elements, furnishings, weather, and landscape

2. Recognize unsafe materials and equipment, actions and activities

3. Remove, or change and/or report unsafe conditions or redirect activity

B. Assist in planning and/or adapting physical arrangements of the environment as necessary for specific types of handicapping conditions

1. Recognize differences/similarities of physical arrangements needed for handicapped/non-handicapped/types of handicaps

2. Recognize necessary adaptations of equipment and materials

3. Assist in organizing and maintaining organization of materials and equipment

C. Assist in planning and scheduling of instructional program

1. Assist in long and short range planning of instructional program and activities

2. Assist in planning individualized instructional program for children, based on the IEP/ARD results

3. Assist in maintaining necessary records and files

4. Assist in preparation of materials and use of equipment

<u>Related Training Sessions</u>

Safety Precautions

Adapting Classrooms for the Handicapped

Planning and Scheduling

<u>To Be Developed</u>

Individualized Plans and Assessment

V. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS

The paraprofessional will assist the teacher in daily observation and child instruction. The paraprofessional will:

A. Recognize normal development including bilingual/bicultural background and the possible effects of various handicapping conditions in the major skill areas of self-help, gross and fine motor, language, socio-emotional, and cognitive development

B. Assist teacher in assessment of children and evaluation of instructional program

1. Observe, report and/or record child-behavior in a systematic manner

2. Assist in completion of various informal assessments, as requested

3. Report behavior and performance of children relative to needs and skill acquisition

4. Report information and observations relative to assessment and evaluation of instructional program.

C. Assist teacher in implementation of daily activities and child-instruction

1. Plan and prepare for individual or group lessons and activities as assigned

2. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for development of self-help skills

3. Recognize and initiate adaptations of instructional materials or activities as necessary

4 Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for language stimulation and development

5. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for gross and fine motor development, including outside as well as inside activities

6. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for increasing self-esteem and creative expression

7. Recognize techniques/materials and implement activities for pre-academic and academic areas, as appropriate

OUTLINE OF INTERFACE BETWEEN COMPETENCIES AND SESSION TOPICS

Training session topics and related competencies are listed here. In some cases, the topics address more than one competency and therefore are listed twice.

SESSION TOPIC	COMPETENCY
TEACHERS AND ASSISTANTS	I
TEACHERS AND ASSISTANTS	II-A
WHAT IS A HANDICAP?	II-B
THE ART OF MAINSTREAMING	II-B
BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS	II-B
COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN	II-B
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	II-C
UNDERSTANDING PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN	II-C
COMMUNITY RESOURCES	II-D
CHILDREN AND HEALTH	III-A
IDENTIFYING CHILDREN IN NEED OF REFERRAL	III-A
EMERGENCY CHILD AID	III-B

SESSION TOPIC	COMPETENCY
PLANNING AND SCHEDULING	III-C
BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS	III-C
COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN	III-C
SAFETY PRECAUTIONS	IV-A
ADAPTING CLASSROOMS FOR THE HANDICAPPED	IV-B
PLANNING AND SCHEDULING	IV-C
INFANT CARE	V-A
THE TODDLER	V-A
THE PRESCHOOLER	V-A
THE ELEMENTARY YEARS	V-A
IDENTIFYING CHILDREN IN NEED OF REFERRAL	V-B
INFANTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	V-B
HEARING PROBLEMS	V-C
SELF-HELP SKILLS	V-C-2
USING MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT	V-C-3
MAKING AND USING LEARNING MATERIALS	V-C-3
USING MATERIALS WITH SPECIAL CHILDREN	V-C-3
TALKING TO LEARN AND LEARNING TO TALK	V-C-4

SESSION TOPIC	COMPETENCY
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH STORYTELLING	V-C-4
LISTENING TO LEARN	V-C-5
MOVEMENT AND LEARNING	V-C-5
PLAYGROUND AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	V-C-5
ENHANCING SELF-ESTEEM THROUGH PUPPETS AND DRAMA	V-C-6
ARTS AND CRAFTS FOR THE HANDICAPPED	V-C-6
SCIENCE FOR THE PRESCHOOL	V-C-7

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Date Dr. Joyce Evans, Director
Special Projects Division